

## Early Childhood Services

### Purpose of Early Childhood Services

- To coordinate activities, establish standards, and provide training to providers of early care and education for children so that they can meet their goals as agreed upon with the department.

### Child Care Licensing

County social service offices conduct child care licensing studies, investigate complaints, and issue correction orders. Regional offices issue licenses, denials, revocations, and suspensions. The state office develops regulations, policies, and procedures; conducts licensing training; reviews notices before issuance; and provides technical assistance.

### N.D. Child Care Provider Data

As of March 2007 there were:

- **919 self certified child care providers**  
*They self certify that they comply with some health and safety regulations. They are not inspected or monitored.*  
(Capacity: 4,595 children)
- **1,667 licensed child care providers**  
*They are licensed by the state and undergo initial and ongoing inspections to assure compliance with health and safety standards.* (Capacity: 35,776 children)
- **785 relative approved providers**  
(Capacity: 1,746 children)
- The voluntary background check registry, *CareCheck*, includes about **1200** providers

### Corrective Actions Taken In 2006

*Involve licensed and self-certified providers*

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Intent to deny license/certification | 17  |
| • Denial of license or certification   | 20  |
| • Intent to revoke                     | 6   |
| • Revocations                          | 12  |
| • Suspensions                          | 0   |
| • Appeals                              | 5   |
| • Correction orders (county issued)    | 262 |
| • Concerns/Complaints                  | 184 |

### Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)

CCR&R works to improve the system of early learning for children by assisting families searching for child care, supporting child care

programs and working with communities to address child care issues. Established in 1992 by the North Dakota Legislature and supported by public and private funding, CCR&R services are available throughout the state.

#### ▪ *Helping Families*

CCR&R assists families in their search for quality child care by supplying families with individualized referrals to all types of licensed child care as well as resources to help parents evaluate and choose appropriate care for their children. In the past year, CCR&R helped 4,190 families find child care for 5,304 children.

#### ▪ *Helping Child Care Providers*

CCR&R supports individuals and programs that care for children by coordinating meaningful training opportunities and resources, technical assistance to become licensed or to improve quality, and assistance in filling vacancies.

#### ▪ *Training & Professional Development*

CCR&R sponsors a wide variety of training classes, workshops and conferences designed specifically for people working in early childhood settings. Educational and innovative trainings, usually delivered in the evening and on Saturdays, are offered for child care providers from both family and center-based programs, educators, parents, foster care providers, and those interested in the development of children age birth through twelve years of age. In the past year, CCR&R held 346 training events (total 1,194 hours of professional development), which were attended by 5,062 (duplicated) people.

#### ▪ **Technical Assistance & Consultation**

CCR&R has developed a series of structured consultation services designed to raise the quality of child care. Documentation gathered by CCR&R over the past four years using the nationally recognized Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (Harms, Clifford, Cryer) has shown that the majority of care in North Dakota is mediocre - meeting basic health and safety needs but with limited warmth or learning opportunities.

CCR&R's newest project, Right from the Start (RFS) for family and group child care providers, is a combination of independent learning activities, application of a reliable assessment tool (Family Day Care Rating Scale, FDCRS), development of an action plan, and ongoing interaction with a trained consultant.

CCR&R's Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) provides individualized on-site consultation and training to child care centers in North Dakota providing infant-toddler care. Quality of care, as measured using nationally accepted standards, has increased as much as 20% in participating programs.

CCR&R employs nurses as child care health consultants to assist child care programs in implementing health and safety practices that protect children and their families.

In the past year CCR&R, responded to 1,870 requests from child care providers for technical assistance or consultation.

#### ▪ **Helping Communities**

CCR&R builds connections in communities to generate support for child care issues by providing reliable data and encouraging partnerships to expand the child care capacity. CCR&R helps the public understand the important connection between the quality of care children receive in the early years and school success.

#### **N.D. Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers**

Launched in 1993 with support from the Bush Foundation of St. Paul, Minn., this initiative has enabled North Dakota to use the West Ed Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers curriculum to provide ongoing training and

consultation to providers caring for infants and toddlers.

#### **2006 Outcomes**

- 123 training events
- 437 hours of training (Attendance: 605)
- Since 2000, 1777 child care providers have attended some PITC training
- 30 child care center-based classrooms & 12 family/group child care programs participated in Quality Improvement Programs

#### **Accreditation Scholarship Program**

This program provides funding, when available, for child care programs including family providers, centers, and school-age programs for the accreditation process.

#### **Growing Futures: Early Childhood Professional Development Plan**

The reconstituted Professional Development Committee is in the process of implementing the Growing Futures plan.

#### **Early Learning Guidelines**

The Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Department of Public Instruction is editing the third draft of the *Early Learning Guidelines Birth to Five*. The guidelines have been field tested, and will be shared with the public before implementation.

#### **State Early Childhood Services Team**

The State Early Childhood Services Team consists of the Regional Early Childhood Supervisors, CCR&R Directors, County Licensors, County Directors (appointed by the County Directors Association) and the State Administrator of Early Childhood Services. The team was established in 1999 to improve communication within the early childhood services delivery system, to identify challenges and issues related to early childhood services, and to enhance the service delivery system. The State Administrator of Early Childhood Services convenes team meetings in Bismarck.

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